

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 07092 191811 Z

51

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 AID-20 EB-11 COME-00 INT-08 IO-13

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 RSR-01 /161 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2010

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 07092

E. O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, ETRD, NI, UK, EEC

SUBJECT: GOWON VISIT TO LONDON

BEGIN SUMMARY: BRITISH BELIEVE GOWON' S LONDON VISIT
WENT EXTREMELY WELL, THOUGH IT WAS LARGELY CEREMONIAL
IN NATURE AND SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS WERE NOT DISCUSSED
IN DEPTH. END SUMMARY

1. FCO WEST AFRICAN DEPT HEAD, DAWBARN, HAS GIVEN US
A RUNDOWN ON GOWON JUNE 13-15 LONDON VISIT. BRITISH
WERE PLEASED THAT BEFORE VISIT NIGERIANS TOOK ACTION
ON TWO IMPORTANT BILATERAL PROBLEMS BY COMPLETING OIL
AGREEMENT WITH SHELL- BP AND REMOVING BAN ON BRITISH
JOURNALISTS.

2. IN 70 MINUTE MEETING WITH HEATH, GOWON RAISED THREE
ISSUES SOUTH AFRICA, RHODESIA AND EC ASSOCIATION
PROBLEM:
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PAGE 02 LONDON 07092 191811 Z

A. SOUTH AFRICA GOWON MADE ARGUMENT ALONG FAMILIAR LINES THAT CONTINUED WHITE GOVERNMENT IN SA WILL BE INCREASINGLY DISRUPTIVE FACTOR IN AFRICA. WHEN DISCUSSION TURNED TO SW AFRICA, HEATH TOOK LINE THAT SAG HAD MADE CONSIDERABLE CONCESSIONS AND THAT OPPORTUNITY FOR SOME PROGRESS SHOULD NOT BE JEOPARDIZED BY TURNING SAG PROPOSALS DOWN FLAT. GOWON WAS EVIDENTLY NOT PERSUADED BY THESE ARGUMENTS.

B. RHODESIA - HEATH REITERATED THAT BRITISH AIM IS TO BRING ABOUT A SETTLEMENT BY NEGOTIATION UNDER A FORMULA WHICH PROVIDES FOR ULTIMATE AFRICAN MAJORITY RULE. WHEN GOWON QUESTIONED THAT SUCH A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WAS POSSIBLE, HEATH EMPHASIZED THAT 1) NO BRITISH GOVERNMENT COULD USE FORCE IN THE SITUATION, AND 2) NEED FOR ANC TO HAVE EFFECTIVE TALKS WITH SMITH REGIME SINCE NO USEFUL NEGOTIATION COULD TAKE PLACE WITHOUT THEM. AS A RESULT OF THIS EXCHANGE, BRITISH BELIEVE THAT GOWON, THOUGH HIGHLY SCEPTICAL HIMSELF, UNDERSTANDS BRITISH POSITION BETTER. GOWON INDICATED HE WOULD USE HIS INFLUENCE TO TRY TO PERSUADE ANC TO OPEN DIALOGUE,

C. EC ASSOCIATION - HEATH EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING OF NIGERIAN POSITION BUT STRESSED THAT SOME AFRICAN COUNTRIES REQUIRE ASSOCIATION FOR THEIR ECONOMIC VIABILITY. GOWON, IN SOFTENING PREVIOUS POSITION TAKEN WITH BRITISH, INDICATED THAT NIGERIA CONTINUED TO OPPOSE EC ASSOCIATION FOR ITSELF, BUT 1) WOULD TAKE PART IN JULY 25 BRUSSEL'S MEETING, AND 2) WOULD NOT THROW WRENCH INTO THE WORKS.

3. SIR ALEC DOUGLAS- HOME MET SEPARATELY FOR ABOUT 40 MINUTES WITH ARIKPO. LATTER RAISED PORTUGUESE QUESTION AND SKIMMED OVER RECENT OAU MEETING, BUT DAWBARN SAID NOTHING SIGNIFICANT EMERGED.

4. DAWBARN MENTIONED THAT THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE TALKS HAD BEEN BETTER THAN EXPECTED. BRITISH CONSIDER THE VISIT TO BE A SUCCESSFUL FOLLOW- ON TO THAT OF SIR ALEC TO LAGOS IN FEBRUARY. ASKED IF THERE WOULD BE A RETURN VISIT OF SOME KIND, DAWBARN SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THE QUESTION OF A VISIT BY THE QUEEN TO NIGERIA HAD
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PAGE 03 LONDON 07092 191811 Z

BEEN RAISED, THOUGH " UNOFFICIALLY".

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